



**Mississippi Emergency
Management Agency**



FEMA

Recovery News

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MISSISSIPPI'S PROJECT RECOVERY CONTINUES TO PROVIDE SERVICES TO THOSE AFFECTED BY HURRICANE KATRINA

JACKSON, Miss. - While the holiday season is a time of good cheer and joy for many, it may also be a stressful time for those who suffered losses resulting from Hurricane Katrina.

Project Recovery, funded by a grant from the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and facilitated with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), provides crisis counseling services through community outreach, public education and information and referral. The services are available to anyone affected by Hurricane Katrina. The project provides these services throughout affected communities, in remaining shelters, Disaster Recovery Centers and to anyone who requests the services. There are no medical or financial screening methods to qualify to receive services.

Project Recovery staff are available to individuals, families, community groups, businesses and service organizations at no charge for the purpose of helping them cope with the stress and emptiness caused by the devastation of the hurricane.

Below are some tips for coping with the holidays:

- Spend time with other people. Coping with stressful events is easier when people support each other.
- Take time to grieve and cry if you need to. To feel better in the long run, you need to let these feelings out instead of pushing them away or hiding them.
- Make sure you get enough rest and sleep. People often need more sleep than usual when they are stressed.
- Try not to overeat or drink excessively to escape stressful feelings. Eat healthy foods and get plenty of exercise.
- Recognize that everyone is responding to the current situation differently. Allow yourself to feel sadness, anger or lonely feelings. Nurture yourself. Take time out of each day to care for yourself.
- Life is full of changes. Consider what is important in your life and good about these times.

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When should a person seek more help?

Sometimes people need extra help to deal with a traumatic event. People directly affected by this tragedy, young children, and people with emotional problems are more likely to need help. A person may need extra help coping if a month or more after the event he or she:

- Still feels upset or fearful most of the time
- Acts very differently compared to before the trauma
- Can't work or take care of kids or home
- Has important relationships that are continuing to get worse
- Uses drugs or drinks excessively
- Feels jumpy or has frequent nightmares
- Still can't stop thinking about the storm
- Still can't enjoy life on a daily basis

Sources: The National Mental Health Association, www.nmha.org and National Center for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, www.ncptsd.org

“As we look back on the past year and celebrate the Christmas season, we continue to be extremely mindful of those who have lost so much on the Gulf Coast,” said Dr. Randy Hendrix, Executive Director of the Mississippi Department of Health. “I find comfort in knowing individuals in need have access to the services provided by Project Recovery and its staff during this potentially trying time.”

The Project Recovery helpline is accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week. For assistance, call **1-866-856-3227**.

“The state of Mississippi has developed a much-needed program that is also accessible to evacuees and residents visiting the Disaster Recovery Centers throughout the state,” said Nick Russo, federal coordinating officer for the disaster recovery.

For additional information, visit the Mississippi Department of Mental Health web site at www.dmh.state.ms.us

FEMA manages federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates mitigation activities, works with state and local emergency managers, and manages the National Flood Insurance Program. FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on March 1, 2003.

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